P.D. James

Full Name: Phyllis Dorothy James White
Born: 1920
Hometown: London, England

Biography: P. D. James is the author of twenty books, most of which have been filmed and broadcast on television in the United States and other countries. She spent thirty years in various departments of the British Civil Service, including the Police and Criminal Law Department of Great Britain's Home Office. She has served as a magistrate and as a governor of the BBC. In 2000 she celebrated her eightieth birthday and published her autobiography, *Time to Be in Earnest*. The recipient of many prizes and honors, she was created Baroness James of Holland Park in 1991. She lives in London and Oxford.

Awards: International Crime Writing Hall of Fame 2008; Grand Master Award from Mystery Writers of America, 1999; Diamond Dagger from British Crime Writers' Association, 1987

Favorite film: *The Third Man*

Favorite food: Roast duck and freshly picked peas and new potatoes. Raspberries and cream.

Favorite weapon: None. "The weapon should always be appropriate to the murderer," P.D. James has said. "For example, elderly ladies, however murderous, are unlikely in the UK to have access to guns.

Favorite place to visit: Always London

Items Always on Her Desk:
- dictionary and a thesaurus
- a pad of lined A4 paper
- a collection of ball point pens with black ink

Inspector Adam Dalgliesh novels:
*Cover Her Face* (1962) – MYS – DVD – V
*A Mind to Murder* (1963) – MYS – DVD – Audio
*Unnatural Causes* (1967) – MYS – LP – DVD
*Shroud for a Nightingale* (1971) – MYS – DVD
*Black Tower* (1975) – MYS – DVD – V
From P.D. James website – frequently asked questions:

How did you create your hero/detective Adam Dalgliesh?

Adam Dalgliesh is not drawn from any person I know but does, I suppose, represent the qualities I most admire in a man, i.e. sensitivity, courage and intelligence. I began with a professional detective attached to New Scotland Yard because I was setting out to write what I hoped would be a fairly realistic detective story and thought that this required a professional detective. Later I created Cordelia Gray, my private eye.

From the book *Mystery: A Celebration* by Ron Miller:

Detective Inspector Adam Dalgliesh first enters the world of mystery about 50 pages into P.D. James' 1962 novel *Cover Her Face* when he is sent out by Scotland Yard to investigate a death among the gentry at an isolated, luxurious country estate.

Even then, his reputation precedes him. "I've heard of him," one of the suspects muses as the tall, dark, and handsome detective arrives at the crime scene. "Ruthless, unorthodox, working always against time. I suppose he has his own private compulsions. At least they've thought us adversaries worthy of the best."

Dalgliesh may indeed be the best Scotland Yard has to offer these days. His reputation for never theorizing ahead of the facts is legendary, yet his success at solving complex cases in record time is astonishing. He's more experienced than Detective Chief Inspector Jane Tennison, for instance, and much less trouble-prone. And he's the equal in every way of Inspector Morse, without the endearing imperfections. All of that may account for the string of promotions that have raised him to the rank of commander, in charge of a special unit of the Metropolitan Police that handles only the most "sensitive" murder cases. In fact, along the corridors of power at New Scotland Yard, the worst you will hear about Commander Dalgliesh is that he may be a little hard to know. He's an intense, rather solitary man whose taciturnity often is interpreted as intimidating aloofness.